

## Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /011 R

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JCS WASHDC

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S E C R E T STATE 069147

EXDIS - MILITARY ADDEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING REPEATS STATE 69147 ACTION SAIGON INFO TAIPEI INFO  
JAKARTA SEOUL MARCH 27TH

QUOTE

S E C R E T STATE 069147

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, VS, KS, TW, ID

SUBJECT: LST LOAN

REF: A. SAIGON 3340; B. TAIPEI 1422; C. JAKARTA 3452  
D. SEOUL 1956; E. SAIGON 3276; F. STATE64016

1. ROC APPEARS MOST PROMISING SOURCE OF LSTS FOR RVN. IN  
VIEW OF INCREASINGLY URGENT NEED TO EVACUATE REFUGEES FROM  
DANANG, WE NOW BELIEVE THAT DIRECT ROC PARTICIPATION IN  
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SEALIFT -- I.E., GROC DISPATCH OF ROC-CREWED LSTS TO DANANG

WITHIN NEXT 24 TO 48 HOURS -- MAY OFFER QUICKER ALTERNATIVE THAN WORKING OUT LOAN OF LSTS. BOTH OPTIONS, HOWEVER, APPEAR WORTH PURSUING.

2. FOR SAIGON: REQUEST THAT, IN LIGHT OF ARRANGEMENTS NOW BEING MADE TO EVACUATE REFUGEES FROM DANANG, YOU CONFIRM AT HIGHEST NECESSARY LEVEL THAT GVN STILL WANTS LSTS. DISCUSSION SHOULD ADDRESS BOTH POSSIBILITIES OF DIRECT ROC PARTICIPATION AND LOAN. YOU SHOULD SEEK FIRM FIGURE OF NUMBER OF LSTS NEEDED. WE BELIEVE GVN SHOULD FOLLOW UP MARCH 23 REQUEST THROUGH ROC EMBASSY SAIGON AND RVN EMBASSY TAIPEI, PARTICULARLY IF DIRECT PARTICIPATION DESIRED. YOU SHOULD REPORT RESULTS OF DISCUSSIONS TO DEPARTMENT AND TAIPEI ASAP.

3. FOR TAIPEI: BASED ON SAIGON'S REPORT PER PARA 2 ABOVE, REQUEST YOU FOLLOW UP WITH GROC WITH VIEW TO SECURING FAVORABLE RESPONSE. YOUR APPROACH SHOULD STRESS URGENCY OF SITUATION AND NEED FOR EARLIEST POSSIBLE REPLY. WE RECOGNIZE THAT ROC DIRECT PARTICIPATION MIGHT INVOLVE ROC MORE DEEPLY THAN IT WISHES AND THAT GROC MIGHT THEREFORE NOT WANT TO TAKE THIS OPTION. OBVIOUSLY THEIR PREFERENCE, IF STRONGLY HELD, IS CONTROLLING.

4. IF GROC AGREES TO DIRECT PARTICIPATION, WE UNDERSTAND THIS WOULD BE LIMITED TO EVACUATING REFUGEES. IN THAT EVENT, WE WOULD HOPE GROC WOULD PROVIDE LARGEST POSSIBLE NUMBER OF VESSELS. IF GROC AGREES TO LOAN OF LSTS, WE UNDERSTAND VESSELS MIGHT BE USED FOR BOTH MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PURPOSES.

5. WITH RESPECT TO ROC DIRECT PARTICIPATION, WE WOULD HOPE GROC WOULD BEAR COST OF OPERATION TO SUPPORT URGENT HUMANITARIAN UNDERTAKING ON BEHALF OF VIETNAMESE PEOPLE. FYI: OUR LEGISLATION IS SUCH THAT WE COULD NOT FUND ROC OPERATION IF VESSELS WENT IN ARMED AND EQUIPPED FOR COMBAT, BUT U. S. FUNDING IS POSSIBLE IF VESSELS WERE UNARMED AND WERE ENGAGED IN PURELY RPT PURELY CIVILIAN EVACUATION. TO IMPLY THIS IN OUR PRESENT REQUEST, HOWEVER, WE COULD SUBJECT OURSELVES TO LENGTHY NEGOTIATIONS AT A MOMENT WHEN

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TIME IS CRITICALLY SHORT. IN ADDITION, WE PREFER FOR OBVIOUS REASONS THAT ROC ASSIST WITHOUT USG FUNDING AS PART OF GENUINE INTERNATIONAL RELIEF EFFORT. (PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT FOR EXAMPLE HAS AGREED TO LOAN LST WITHOUT -- AS WE UNDERSTAND -- COMPENSATION FROM USG OR GVN.) END FYI

6. WITH RESPECT TO LOAN, WE ENVISION GVN AGREEING TO SEEK TO RETURN VESSELS IN GOOD CONDITION. WE SHOULD NOT RPT

NOT RULE OUT POSSIBILITY THAT THEY MIGHT NOT BE RETURNED OR RETURNED IN DAMAGED CONDITION. SINCE USG IS NOT RPT NOT IN POSITION TO OFFER GUARANTEES OF SAFE RETURN, REHAB, OR REPLACEMENT, YOU SHOULD MAKE THIS CLEAR TO GROC. NEVERTHELESS, YOU SHOULD STRESS THAT GVN IS IN ABSOLUTE NEED OF ASSISTANCE AND HAS APPEALED TO ANTI-COMMUNIST FRIENDS TO HELP MEET THIS NEED. YOU MAY NOTE THAT FOR ITS PART USG IS SUPPLYING CRITICAL SUPPORT IN THIS AREA BUT THAT MAGNITUDE OF PROBLEM HAS OBLIGED GVN TO TURN TO OTHERS FOR HELP IN AUGMENTING SEALIFT CAPACITY. YOU SHOULD INDICATE TO GROC THAT ALTHOUGH WE RECOGNIZE IT IS BEING ASKED TO MAKE SACRIFICES, WE FEEL IT WILL RECOGNIZE THE NEED TO RISE TO THE OCCASION.

7. IF ROC IS WILLING TO MAKE LOAN, IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR DEPARTMENT TO GIVE PRIOR NOTICE TO CONGRESS OF USG

CONSENT TO TRANSFER OF MAP OR FMS ORIGIN PROPERTY. THEREFORE, REQUEST YOU PROVIDE US WITH SPECIFIC IDENTIFICATION OF VESSELS ROC IS WILLING TO LOAN INCLUDING WHETHER MAP OR FMS ORIGIN AND HULL NUMBERS.

8. FOR SAIGON: BEFORE USG CAN GIVE CONSENT TO TRANSFER OF VESSELS TO RVN WE WILL HAVE TO OBTAIN WRITTEN ASSURANCES FROM GVN THAT IT WILL NOT TRANSFER THE LSTS TO ANY THIRD COUNTRY. THIS IS A STANDARD STATUTORY REQUIREMENT AND DEPARTMENT WILL PROVIDE APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE WHEN VESSELS ARE IDENTIFIED. KISSINGER UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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